

KASSERINE: BAPTISM OF FIRE

EXCLUSIVE RULES

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10.0 INTRODUCTION

Kasserine is a simulation of the Axis offensive against the inexperienced US II Corps in Tunisia during late February 1943.

10.1 FIRST PLAYER

The Axis player is considered the first player throughout the game (see 3.0).

11.0 REINFORCEMENTS

Enter reinforcements in the hexes listed, or in any hexes within the hex-range listed (inclusive) at the beginning of each respective player's movement phase or mobile movement phase (except per 15.0). A unit may move immediately during the same turn it arrives on the map; however, no unit may arrive and end its movement stacked in the same hex with any other unit.

11.1 QUANTITY OF REINFORCEMENTS

Reinforcements generally arrive during specific game turns, though various reinforcements from

both sides only arrive if specific events have occurred (even if only momentarily), and are titled as such below. If a titled event does not occur, the indicated reinforcements listed under that event may not arrive on the map. Note that the term “Axis” refers to German or Italian units, and the term “Allies” refers to US or other Allied units.

GERMANY (AXIS)

GAME TURN ONE	
Unit Type:	Hexes:
6-5-10	3918-3920
5-3-12	3918-3920
3-4-11	3918-3920
3-4-11	3918-3920
2-2-9	3918-3920
2-2-9	3918-3920
5-3-12	3726
2-2-9	3726
5-3-12	3225
3-4-11	3225
3-4-11	3225
2-2-9	3225
GAME TURN TWO	
3-2-16	2526
GAME TURN FOUR	
2-2-11	3920
1-2-9	3921
3-2-16	0623-1423 or 2126-2926
4-3-12	0623-1423 or 2126-2926
4-4-11	0623-1423 or 2126-2926
4-4-11	0623-1423 or 2126-2926

2-2-9	0623-1423 or 2126-2926
4-3-9	0623-1423 or 2126-2926
GAME TURN FIVE	
(Only if any Axis unit has captured Sbeitla; if not, delay each turn until captured):	
3-2-11	0623-1423 or 2126- 2926
3-3-11	0623-1423 or 2126- 2926
2-1-7	0623-1423 or 2126- 2926
2-1-7	0623-1423 or 2126- 2926

UNITED STATES (ALLIES)

GAME TURN ONE	
Unit Type:	Hexes:
1-3-7	0724-1223
2-2-9	0724-1223
2-1-16	0724-1223
3-3-12	3906-3911
GAME TURN TWO:	
1-2-7	0105
2-1-11	3906-3911
3-2-12	2701
1-4-6	1601
Once any Axis unit enters any hex west of Kasserine (2014)	
1-2-7	3906-3911
2-3-7	3906-3911

1-1-6	3906-3911
2-1-10	3906-3911
2-5-7	2701
2-3-7	2701
1-1-7	2701
1-1-7	2701
Once any Axis unit captures Sbeitla (2706)	
1-2-7	0104
2-3-7	0105
Once any Axis unit enters any hex north of Sbeitla (2706)	
2-2-12	1301-1901 or 2401-3001
2-1-12	1301-1901 or 2401-3001
2-1-12	1301-1901 or 2401-3001
2-2-11	1301-1901 or 2401-3001
1-2-7	1301-1901 or 2401-3001
Once any Axis unit is adjacent to Thala (2003) or Tebessa (0306)	
3-2-12	0104

11.2 WHEN REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE

Reinforcements arrive at the beginning of a player's movement phase. A unit arriving when the movement phase begins must expend movement points in the first hex entered normally, and may then continue to move thereafter. Mobile units that did not arrive during the movement phase may arrive at the beginning of the mobile movement phase instead, and may continue to move normally thereafter.

11.3 WHERE REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE

In the hexes or range of hexes listed under 11.1.

11.4 REINFORCEMENTS AND COMBAT

Reinforcements may participate in combat normally during the combat phase of the same turn they

arrive. If a reinforcement unit's arrival hex is occupied by any enemy unit, the reinforcement may not arrive until a game turn wherein that hex is no longer occupied by any enemy unit.

12.0 LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Each side has supply symbols along the edge of the map, representing their lines of communication to rear areas off the map (they also function as entry hexes for reinforcing units). If any supply symbol hex is currently occupied by an enemy unit, the side that lost its supply symbol will lose one support fire marker (per each supply symbol hex currently occupied by an enemy unit) from each subsequent game turn's allotment while that supply symbol hex is occupied by any enemy unit.

13.0 ENEMY ZONES OF CONTROL

Reinforcements may be placed into an enemy zone of control, but must abide by the normal rules (see 6.0).

13.1 US RANGERS

The US Commando unit (which represents the US 1st Ranger Battalion) may always ignore enemy zones of control.

14.0 MINEFIELDS

US minefield hexsides are printed on the map and are considered permanent terrain features that can neither be created nor destroyed during the course of the game. US minefields remain friendly to the US throughout the game. US minefields do not become friendly to Axis units when captured; their effects remain throughout the game.

14.1 FRIENDLY MINEFIELDS

US minefields have no combat effects on any Allied units, though Allied units must expend +2 movement points to cross any US minefield hexside.

14.2 ENEMY MINEFIELDS

An Axis unit may only move across a US minefield hexside if it occupies an adjacent hex at the beginning of its movement. An Axis unit that moves across a US minefield hexside must expend all its movement allowance to do so and stop in the entered hex.

An Axis unit may retreat through a US minefield hex, but is depleted as a result (or eliminated if already depleted or a one-sided unit).

NOTE: zones of control extend into US minefield hexes normally. No unit (except commando units) may move from EZOC to EZOC across a minefield hexside.

Any Axis attacks on any Allied unit across a minefield hexside must be resolved using the minefield terrain type on the Combat Results Table. US attacks on any Axis unit across a US minefield hexside suffer no penalty.

14.3 FORITIFIED BOXES

The three US minefield hexes are considered fortified boxes. They are minefields per 14.0, except any US unit occupying a fortified box hex may ignore any retreat result (whether a defender retreat or an attacker retreat). Any retreating US unit outside a fortified box must continue its full retreat normally; its retreat is not cancelled by merely moving into or through a fortified box.

German units never derive any benefit for occupying a fortified box.

15.0 YOUKS-LES-BAINS AIRFIELD

The towns of Thala and Tebessa represent the routes to the Youks-les-Bains airfield (not depicted on

the map). As such, if any German or Italian unit captures Thala (2003) or Tebessa (0306), the German player will then receive two additional reinforcements as of the game turn after Thala or Tebessa has been captured (even if only momentarily).

Unit Type:	Hexes:
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3-4-11	3909
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3-4-11	3911
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As per 11.2, these units arrive at the beginning of the movement phase (not the mobile movement phase), and may move normally per 11.2 unless 11.4 applies.

16.0 US ENGINEERS

Any Allied unit currently within a US engineer unit's movement allowance (counted in hexes, not by MP), including an engineer unit itself, is assumed to be fortified per 7.5.

17.0 PROHIBITED MOVEMENT

Movement into or through grayed "Prohibited" hexes is forbidden to all units.

17.1 FREDENDALL'S "PENNY PACKETS"

During the first two game turns, no Allied unit located west of the Kasserine (2014) hex row may move during the movement phase or the mobile movement phase (including arriving reinforcements after they've moved onto the map). After the second game turn, all units may move normally.

18.0 VICTORY CONDITIONS

The German player wins the game if he can, at any time (even if only momentarily) capture at least three of the red objective hexes printed on the map; they include the towns Sbeitla (2714), Tebessa (0306), Thala (2003) and the red star objective hexes 0104, 0105 and 1601. To qualify as "captured," an Axis unit must either currently occupy or be the last to have occupied a particular objective hex. Further, each captured objective hex, furthermore, must not be within any enemy unit's zone of control.

If the German player has only captured two of the red objective hexes (at any time, even if only momentarily) the game is a draw until the German player captures a third objective hex. If the German player fails to capture more than one of the red objective hexes before the end of the last game turn, the game is a US victory.

19.0 SCENARIOS

Kasserine has one historic scenario of the Axis assault into the Kasserine Pass, as well as the US attempt to prevent the Germans from breaking through toward the Youks-les-Bains airfield.

Set-up the following units in the hexes indicated below. The map is printed with the set-up locations of each starting US (and Allied) unit included in the game. Set-up locations have no other impact on game play.

GERMANY

No Axis units begin the game on the map.

UNITED STATES

Unit Type:	Hexes:
1-3-7	3718
1-2-7	3922

1-2-7	3722
3-2-12	3819
2-1-14	2714
2-3-11	2814
2-3-11	3911
2-1-11	3810
3-2-12	3811
1-2-7	1704
1-3-7 (E)	0804
2-3-11	0312
2-1-11	0507
1-2-7	1220
2-1-14	0914
2-1-11	0404

20.0 GAME NOTES

The Battle for Kasserine Pass effectively decimated the inexperienced US II Corps, and presented an acute threat to the Allied rear areas in Algeria. In game terms, a US defeat is already underway when the scenario begins (Gen. Fredendall had sown the seeds of the II Corps' defeat well before the first turn of the game). However, Gen. Rommel's victory at the Battle for Kasserine Pass was not total; the Germans had routed the US II Corps, it is true, but not thoroughly. After the Germans' initial blow, US forces began to regroup and show a more spirited defense as the German forces pushed towards Algeria. Rommel advanced towards the towns of Thala and Tebessa (beyond which led to the Youks-les-Bains airfield to the northwest) but could not break through the stiffening US resistance to capture either town (aided in part by some *ad hoc* Allied units that arrived in Thala to bolster its defense, and incessant barrages from the US 9th Infantry Division's artillery).

Rommel's problems were always the same in North Africa...an interminable lack of men and *matériel*. Despite his victory at Kasserine, Rommel was unable to capture Thala or Tebessa, and lacked enough forces to advance to the Youks-les-Bains airfield, which would have been a severe setback for Allied forces in Tunisia when the Luftwaffe was still marshalling parity with the Allies in the air (and even occasionally air superiority, as occurred during the opening phase of the Battle of Kasserine Pass). Fortunately for the US, the Germans were unable to push into Thala or Tebessa, eventually forcing Rommel to withdraw beyond the range of US artillery, leaving the US II Corps considerably weaker, though considerably wiser.

The situation in *Kasserine* is typical; the attacking player possesses a stronger force (and is thus on the offensive) with an initial superiority of support fire assets. However, he must thrust quickly to seize his objectives before the defending player begins to muster his reinforcements and accrue support fire. In that regard, the defending player must stall for time, and thereby attempt to deny the attacking player the map's objective hexes until after the last turn of the game. US units are weaker than the German units, but the German player must be careful not to suffer too many "Ex"

(Exchange) results, especially when the trade-off is unprofitable; it's not a wise strategy to routinely lose a company of tanks to capture an enemy position. The most obvious solution to this dilemma is to conduct attacks with panzers *and* infantry (in the event of an "Ex" result, or the occasional "(A)" result, the German player can then choose to deplete an infantry battalion instead of a valuable *schwere panzer* battalion). This is quite suitable as a game mechanic because it compels players to employ "combined arms" tactics, which had been shown to be a superior tactical doctrine during the Second World War. Unfortunately, however, infantry are generally too slow to keep up with tanks, although the German player in *Kasserine* is provided with a handful of mechanized infantry battalions (i.e., panzer grenadiers), which can keep pace with the panzers.

That being said, there may be occasions whereby the German player may opt to venture his panzer battalions well ahead of the main body to maintain momentum, or perhaps to exploit a weakness in the US lines. Gen. Rommel orchestrated several such attempts...not all of which were successful (several of Rommel's armored thrusts were beaten back by US artillery barrages). To that point, the US player's circumstance in *Kasserine* is quite manageable, actually; there are adequate Allied reinforcements to form a respectable defense, especially considering the map's rugged terrain. However, the American units are brittle, and so the US player should usually retain a small reserve to check any unexpected breakthroughs (incidentally, the German player should maintain a reserve as well—even if only a single A.T. battalion—to counter infiltrations by enemy light tank or recon battalions that may attempt to capture Axis supply hexes). The US player must also be careful not to over-commit to one area of the battlefield; most of the German units are mobile, allowing the German player to redirect the focus of his assault with ease. In that regard, the key to a rapid German advance is the trails and roads. The US player must defend critical junctions, particularly those wending in and through broken or rouge terrain hexes; an undefended trail or road can give the German player a sudden opportunity to blitz through the Allied player's lines, especially if he has panzers primed to exploit during the mobile movement phase.

Indeed, throughout the long history of warfare, roads have often been the key to victory, particularly in direct proportion to the terrain of the battlefields. *Kasserine* exemplifies this truism well, especially because of the generous movement allowances of most mobile units in the game. A battalion of tanks can cover a fair distance while traveling along an extended wadi, but can cover nearly half of the map if moving down an open road. Like the old adage says, 'All roads lead to Rome'...or in this case, Tebessa.

—Eric Harvey

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